

Claims Listing

Please cancel nonelected withdrawn claims 20, 21, 22 and 33 without prejudice.

Please amend claim 34 as indicated in the attached Claims Listing.

A complete Claims Listing, showing all claims presently in the application and indicating the present status of each pending claim, is attached as required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c).

Claims Listing

Claims 1-19 (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously Amended) An apparatus, comprising: an interchange mechanism and an optical assembly, said optical assembly having a housing and having a plurality of optical elements arranged along a beam path to form a projection objective or an illuminating system, said plurality of optical elements including at least one selected optical element and a plurality of remaining optical elements, said selected optical element being selectable from among a plurality of selectable optical elements available from said interchange mechanism, said interchange mechanism being operable to insert said selected optical element into the beam path, and to remove said selected optical element from the beam path, said selected optical element being inserted into an operating position in the beam path, said operating position being a position at which said selected optical element is separate from said interchange mechanism, said interchange mechanism being supported by a structure which is substantially dynamically decoupled from said housing and from said remaining optical elements arranged along the beam path.

24. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said interchange mechanism is located outside said housing and wherein said housing includes an opening adapted to the dimensions of said plurality of selectable optical elements such that said at least one selected optical element can be inserted into the beam path by way of said opening and removed from the beam path by way of said opening.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said interchange mechanism comprises a lifting device for lifting said at least one selected optical element, said at least one selected optical element being positioned and/or fixed in the beam path via said lifting device.

27. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 26, wherein said lifting device is dynamically decoupled from said optical assembly and is connected to said structure which is substantially dynamically decoupled from said optical assembly.

28. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 23, further comprising a holding device which serves as a stop and/or for fixing said at least one selected optical element in the beam path.

29. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein said holding device is connected to one of said remaining ones of said plurality of optical elements.

30. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 28, wherein said at least one selected optical element is fixed in the beam path by said holding device using a magnetic force.

31. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 26, wherein spring elements are provided between said lifting device and said at least one selected optical element.

32. (Previously Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 26, wherein at least one of: (i) said interchange mechanism and (ii) said lifting device, are located outside said housing of said optical assembly.

33. (Cancelled).

34. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 23, wherein said at least one selected optical element comprises [[a]] a revolving disc diaphragm.

35. (Previously Amended) An apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein said beam path comprises a beam path for EUV light.

36. (Previously Amended) A projection exposure machine for semiconductor microlithography, said projection exposure machine, comprising: an apparatus in accordance with Claim 23 wherein, said beam path is a beam path for EUV light.